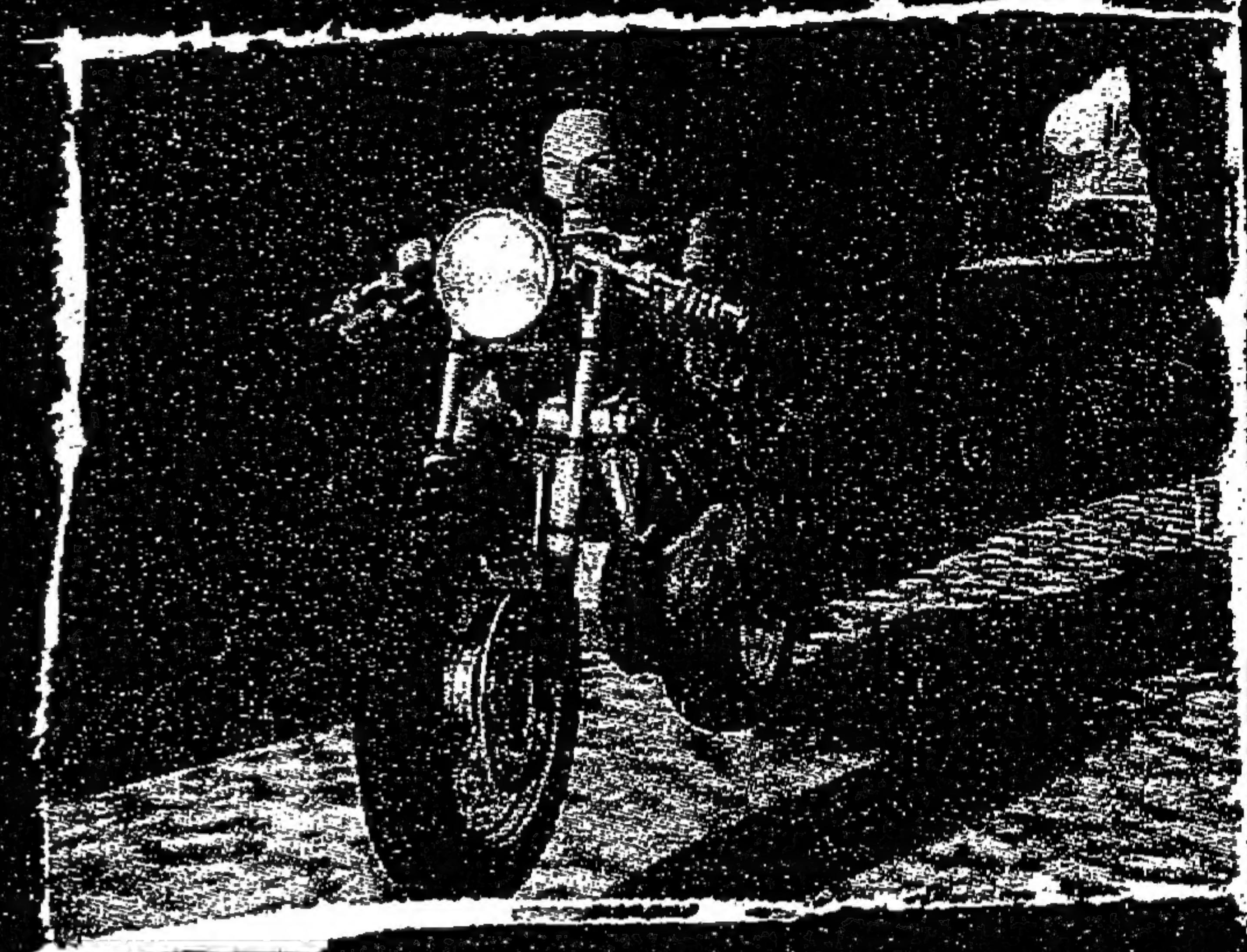
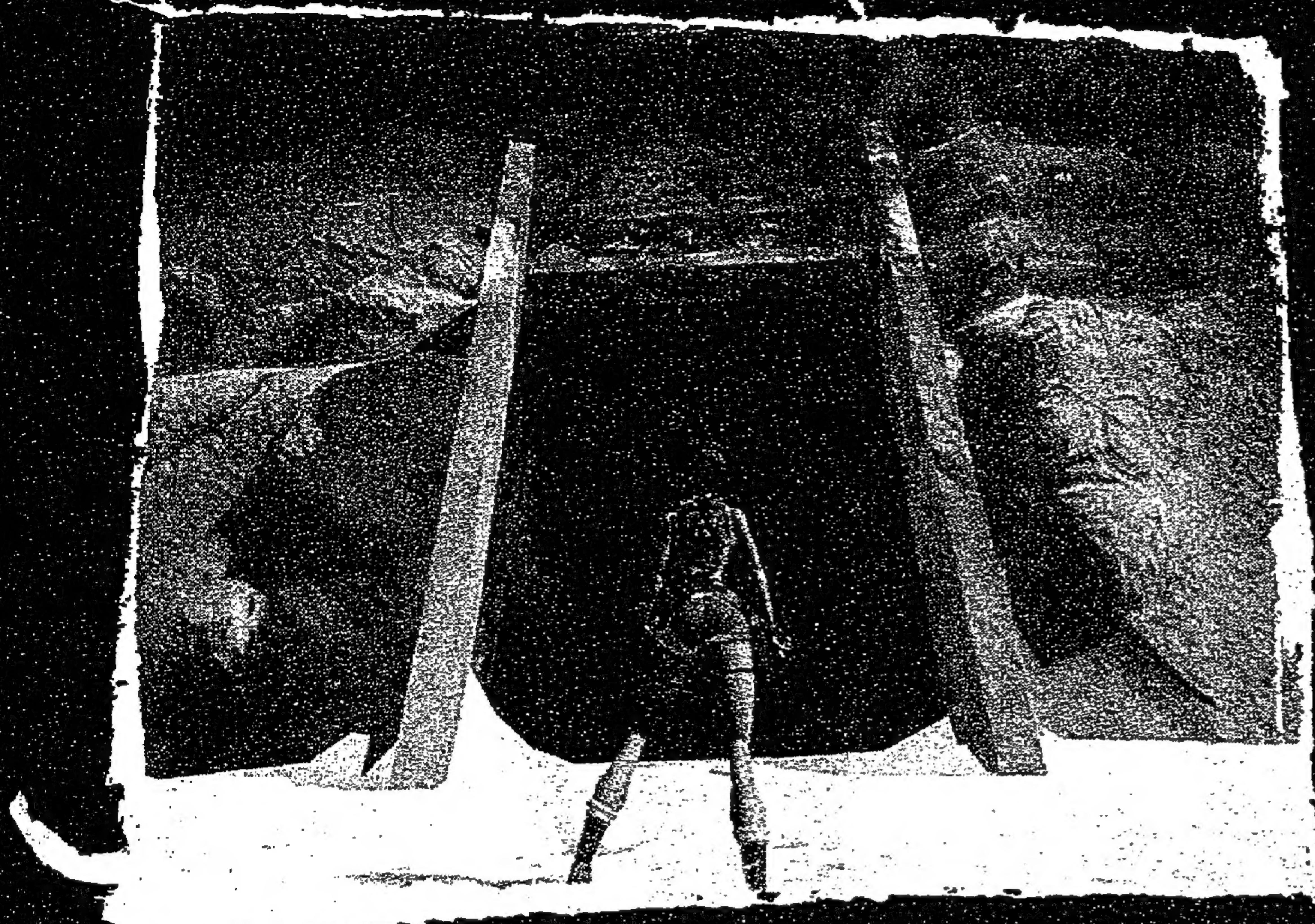




# Lara's footsteps

Miss Croft's rise to the top of the games world has looked effortless. Even more staggering has been her ability to conquer the worlds outside it, and become a true all-action heroine – the ultimate fighting Millennium dame



## EARLY 1996

Core Design has an idea for a new type of video game – it will be an adventure platform game but with a difference. It will turn the industry on its head. Unlike other games around, this will boast a female character in the main role. She is as yet unnamed.

## MAY 1996

The world's game press gets its first taste of Lara Croft and her Tomb Raider vehicle at the E3 trade show held in Atlanta, Georgia. They only get to try one level – but they like what they see.

## OCTOBER 1996

The game is ready for release and first appears on the now-defunct Sega Saturn console format. It wins critical acclaim from an excited gaming press.

## NOVEMBER 1996

Tomb Raider is released on two more formats – the PC and the PlayStation. In the UK it tops the gaming charts.

## JANUARY 1997

Back in Derby, at Core Design, work begins in earnest on the next chapter of the Tomb Raider story. It is hoped it will be ready by Christmas that year – but nobody knows for sure.

## APRIL 1997

Interest in Lara Croft is unprecedented and even rock band U2 decides it wants a slice of the Lara Croft action. Croft is invited to 'join' their worldwide PopMart tour kicking off in Las Vegas – by making her appearance on massive 'jumbotron' video screens.

## JUNE 1997

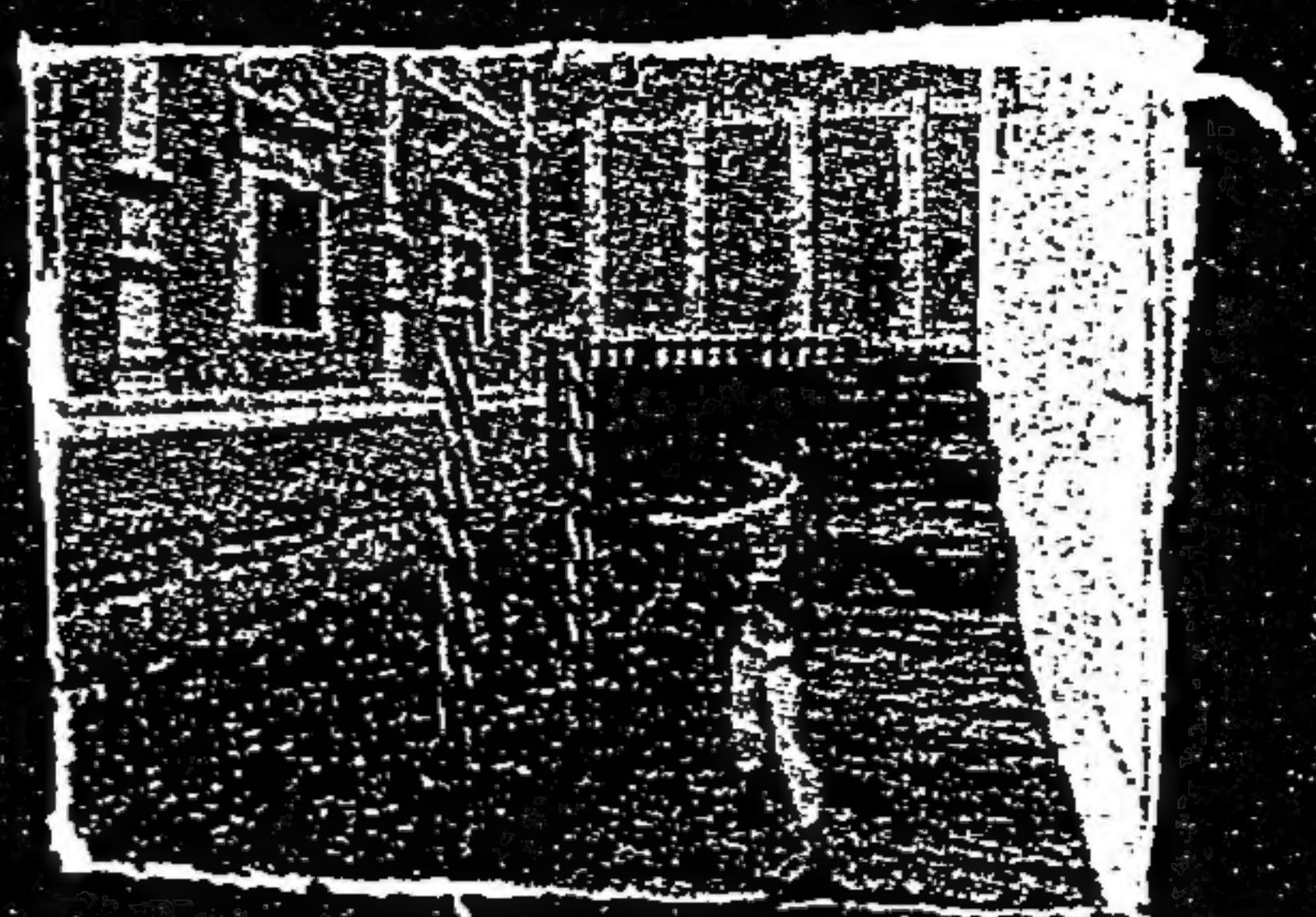
The Prodigy blame Lara Croft for the delay in the release of their latest album.





#### AUGUST 1997

Lara Croft comes to life for the first time – thanks to Rhona Mitra. Mitra is recruited to play Lara Croft for key promotional trade events.



#### NOVEMBER 1997

A year after making her debut in Tomb Raider, Lara Croft is back in a good-looking sequel, Tomb Raider II. Thousands of bottles of Moet & Chandon champagne are relabelled as limited edition Tomb Raider II champagne for the promotional drive. Lara enters the charts in the top slot and soon Core is struggling to keep up with demand on the PC and PlayStation formats.



#### JANUARY 1998

After notching up record sales over the Christmas period, Core announces Hollywood's interest in securing the movie rights to a Lara Croft movie. The question is, who will play Lara? For a while, Elizabeth Hurley seems favourite to land the coveted part.



#### FEBRUARY 1998

Elizabeth Hurley is too old to play Lara Croft claims The Sun, quoting comments by Lara lookalike Rhona Mitra.

#### SEPTEMBER 1998

Michael Owen meets Lara Croft at the launch of Tomb Raider III – and brings the British gaming trade show, ECTS, to a standstill. Owen, who is signed to a football game by Core Design's parent company Eidos Interactive, appears alongside new Lara Croft lookalike, Nell McAndrew. She loses the job after attempting to pose nude for Playboy magazine as Lara Croft.



#### OCTOBER 1998

Tomb Raider III is launched with a private party at the Natural History Museum. A good-humoured Jonathan Ross hosts the event, opening with the words, "Hello, I'm Jonathan Ross. I used to be big in the Eighties!" The game sells well and once again tops the charts with ease.

#### APRIL 1999

Lara Croft's enduring popularity means her commercial worth soars. Many have tried but only Lucozade succeeds in signing up the cyber-star for a television advertising campaign.

#### MAY 1999

Model, Lara Weller, is appointed as the new Lara lookalike. She causes chaos at the US's largest computer games trade show, held in Los Angeles.

#### JUNE 1999

Core quietly celebrates the unflagging success of the Tomb Raider series as the 16 millionth copy is sold.

#### DECEMBER 1999

The latest instalment of the Tomb Raider series is launched. Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation takes Lara to new horizons – including Egypt. In the title she also makes her debut as a pony-tailed 16 year-old.

#### DECEMBER 1999

Exclusive Times level launched featuring a new co-star, Times editor Peter Stothard.

#### OCTOBER 2000

Lara Croft The Movie due to be released.